

Testimony Presented to Environment Committee - February 9, 2009
By Susan Kautz, 3 Beckwith Rd., Haddam, CT 06438

Senator Meyer, Representative Roy, and members of the Environment Committee, thank you for the opportunity for me to express my views on the following bills. I am a CT voter and have been involved in small scale animal rescue and animal welfare for 25 years as well as being a volunteer at HADDAM ANIMAL CONTROL. These bills are very important to me. Due to the time limit I will speak mostly about SB 783 and HB 5811 although there are several other bills that I am in SUPPORT of. As a member of CT Votes for Animals I am in agreement with testimony for SUPPORT of proposed HB 5493- An Act ESTABLISHING A DOG and CAT LEMON LAW, and proposed HB 5798- An ACT PROHIBITING the UNREASONABLE CONFINEMENT AND TETHERING OF DOGS, and proposed HB 5808- AN ACT CONCERNING ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICERS AND the RELEASE of RABIES VACCINATION RECORDS. I urge you to please consider SUPPORT of these bills.

In Addition to those 3 Bills, I am in SUPPORT of proposed HB 5807 An ACT CONCERNING ABANDONED ANIMALS. This bill would make it much easier to identify and help those animals left behind for various reasons. In these tough economic times, the number of abandoned animals is increasing and they need our help now more than ever.

I strongly urge you to OPPOSE Raised bill 783, AN ACT CONCERNING the IMPORTATION of ANIMALS for ADOPTION. I feel the language is unreasonable, especially the part that would require said rescuers to obtain a yearly import permit issued by the Commissioner of Agriculture and quarantine said animals for 48 hours at specific animal isolation facilities. I do small scale animal rescue mostly out of my home and this bill would seriously impede my efforts. Example: I go to St Martin in the Caribbean every January for vacation and see horrific animal situations that compel me to bring animals back to my home in CT. My intention is to adopt them out, not keep them, as that is what I do. Last month I brought back a sweet 1 ½ year old small lab mix whose stray dog companions were being poisoned and hit with a machete. There is no way I could leave this dog in that unconscionable circumstance. If this bill had been implemented, I would not have been able to bring her back and she would have had no chance of a life as a beloved animal companion. She was fully vetted and free from disease. I understand this bill is meant to prevent the spread of disease to our local animals and I am all for protecting them as well, as I am also assisting with many of their adoptions and of course I want them to be healthy and safe. Again, I feel the language is not correct in this raised bill and could place a small scale rescuer like myself in jeopardy of criminal charges if I do not comply with this regulation. I fully SUPPORT ongoing attempts for the Department of Agriculture and CT Votes for Animals to rewrite reasonable language that would support safe transport and healthy conditions for animals coming into CT for adoption.

Lastly, I URGE you to SUPPORT HB 5811- An ACT CONCERNING BATTERY CAGES AND EGG LAYING HENS. This bill is asking that hens have the room to stand up and spread their wings unimpeded in their cages. I do not feel that this is an unreasonable request, and SHOULD be an absolute standard provision that is upheld by CT's anti-animal cruelty law but is not. I ask you to imagine yourselves living in a cage and not even being able to stand, raise your arms and turn around without bumping into someone else. How can this simple request be denied these hens?

I hope you will consider my position on these bills and support my requests. THANK YOU for your time and the opportunity for me to testify.